1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

werewolves as well as of the ingredients to concoct healing baths. Certain priests worship and control a large number of deities, as is shown by those which comprise the personal pantheon of a *gangan* from the valley of Mirebalais: Gedenibo, Ezilie Gé Rouge; 'Ti Kita Demembré; Simbi en Deux Eaux; Bumba Trois Île; Legba; St. Jacques; Ogun Ferraille, Ogun Balandjo, Ogun Ashade; Lemba; Aizan Keleké, Aizan Wedo, Aida Wedo, Damballa Wedo; Baron Samedi, Bosu Trois Cornes; Congo Wangol, Malt' Mapou; Agasu; Agwe, Agweto Woyo; Kadia-Bosu; Sobo Gran'; l'Afrique Guinée. Whatever his ability, the *hungan* can cure only diseases "sent by man" — that is, those caused by magic — and by the *loa*, since against illness sent by God he can do nothing. Gossip disapprovingly whispers how in more than one instance a *hungan* took advantage of his position and the trust of his clients, falsely to represent himself as able to cure an illness "sent by God" through stating it was due to magic.

An important function of the *hungan* or *mambu* is to foretell the future, and it is as a diviner that the *vodun* priest or priestess is most often employed. No major rite would be considered by a family unless divination were resorted to, but consultation is made for a far wider range of affairs than those of a purely religious nature, and no proposed undertaking of any importance in the secular field is begun without visiting a diviner to discover whether or not the fates are propitious. When divining, the priest is usually under possession by his gods, but other methods, such as gazing into a crystal or basin of water, may also be employed. Several divining séances were visited, but no description of them need be given here, since a number of accounts, including an especially full one by Parsons, are available.[30]

Though a certain hierarchy seems to exist among the *vodun* priests in other districts of Haiti, in Mirebalais the organization of the cult is informal to an extreme degree.[31] In the minds of the cult members, various priests in the same region

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3 Mirebalais

Devant Baron, Gede,	Before Baron, Gede,
Derrière la croix, Gede,	Behind the cross, Gede,
Jodi-a m'pé nan sang m'we,	Today I am troubled,
Gedevi, vhele Gede, pa Gede,	Gedevi, call Gede, this Gede,
Jodi-a m'pas nan sang moin.	Today I am troubled.
Balai, rouzé, cerclé, quitté.	Cease to sweep, sprinkle, hoe.
Moin pas nan sang, Baron Samedi.	I am troubled, Baron Samedi.

Shortly after eleven o'clock the *houngan* intervened to calm those possessed, for the time was at hand to give the sacrifices. Summoning the family to assemble again before the *trône* with the offerings, he commenced a long ritual in which each creature was prepared by being carefully washed and combed, while the hair for Boss was also fastidiously perfumed and powdered. At the direction of the *houngan*, the fowls were first offered, the killing taking place at a distance of some thirty or forty feet behind the *trône*. The chickens were held with the two wings and the head in the left hand, so that the neck was exposed. The knife was passed twice over the neck to describe a cross, after which each fowl was cleanly and skillfully dispatched. One of the assistants of the *houngan* held a small calabash in which some of the blood of each animal was caught, and another, knife in hand, sang with him that they were offering this *kokio* to the deity for whom it was intended. As the last of the chickens was being killed, the *houngan* left the *trône* and quietly strangled the pigeons for Dumballa.

All possessions had ceased, except that of a man "mounted" by Gede and a woman by Simbi. The man particularly attracted much attention, for Gede is known as a gossip, and so diverting were his revelations of family scandal that all were too absorbed listening to him to show any interest in the sacrifice of the animals.

Quo'n pard' un gonyon main join' l'eut' ah!
Ma sôlé,
Oh quo'n pardi manman main ma crié! [Ex. 102]

I cried,
Oh, when I lost my mother I cried!
I cried,
Oh, when I lost my mother I cried!
When I lost a man I found another, ah!
When I lost a man I found another, ah!
I cried,
Oh, when I lost my mother I cried!

Protest or complaint songs are sometimes directed against no one in particular but simply call the attention of listeners to the singer's misfortunes. In many such songs the president or one of the deities is mentioned by name. The singer in this way implicitly places responsibility for help. In the following song, one complains of hunger, another theme that runs throughout Haitian folklore and Haitian life.

Rose! President qui vuyé sôlé'm!
Main pas bwé main pas mangé!
M'pas bwé main pas mangé!
Oh m'pas bwé main pas mangé!
President qui vuyé sôlé'm rose!
M'pas bwé main pas mangé! [Ex. 103]

Rose! * The President sends for me!
I haven't drunk, I haven't eaten!
I haven't drunk, I haven't eaten!
Oh, I haven't drunk, I haven't eaten!
The President sends for me, *rose!*
I haven't drunk, I haven't eaten!

Here the lwa Ogoun Balindjo is called upon to take note of prying, insincere people who come to a person's home, observe what is going on, and go away to gossip:

Ogoun Balindjo
Yo vini gu'dé'm
Pou' y'allé vini ah!
Ogoun Balindjo
Li yé wé konsa yé ah!
Ogoun Balindjo
Pa wé yo vini gu'dé moin! [Ex. 104]

Ogoun Balindjo
They come to look at me

* An onomatopoeia.

To go away and talk, eh!
Ogoun Balindjo
The eyes see, the mouth is closed, eh! *
Ogoun Balindjo
Don't you see they come to look at me?

Or again, the lea Ogoun and Loko Atisso are invoked to witness a person's misery, though in this song the cause is not explained:

Ogoun eh gi'dé mizé!
Papa Ogoun ou wa gi'dé mizé!
Gi'dé mizé eh Lok' Atisso gi'dé mizé li yé! [Ex. rep]

Ogoun, eh, look at my misery!
Papa Ogoun, you will look at my misery!
Look at my misery, eh, Loko Atisso, look at my misery here!

The impulse to criticism most often stems from personal injuries, but on occasion songs are used as a community affair to exert social pressures on an errant member of the neighborhood:

Fel' Jean-Pierre wa quitté kwé taba!
Fel' Jean-Pierre ti manze yo tousel!

Brother Jean-Pierre, stop drinking taba! †
Brother Jean-Pierre, the little children are naked!

Although discussions of neighbors' affairs tend to have this moral tone, a vast number of songs are pure gossip and are sung for their ribald or wry humor, as the case may be. In some the objects of ridicule are named; in others the allusions are indirect, so that only those who are familiar with the situation will know the people concerned. Open quarreling often provides amusement and substance for satire. The community can sense petulance, stupidity, and stubbornness through a confusion of charges and countercharges, and is quick to burlesque them. Thus there are public pressures against petty and needless disturbances. The following song refers to a dispute over ownership of an unnamed article.

Mwin dit c'est bagatelle grand monnet Ciyé!
C'est bagatelle grand monnet Ciyé!
Mwin dit c'est zaffai grand monnet Ciyé!
C'est bagatelle grand monnet Ciyé!
Mwin dit n'ap chaché li Ciyé!
N'ap gannin li Ciyé!
Mwin dit c'est bagatelle grand monnet Ciyé!
C'est bagatelle grand monnet Ciyé! [Ex. rep]

* That is, a liar, the eyes should see and the mouth should be closed.
† An alcoholic drink.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

hands. In colonial times fortunes came to plantation owners, and since then have come only to political officeholders. With money one can go to France where he will be accepted as a human being, not turned aside as a Negro; with money one can get an education, live a life of leisure, acquire luxuries. Hence the popularity of law as a profession, for it is the career by which one enters politics. That a president should begin life as an impecunious barrister and end it as a well-to-do landlord, the owner of several villas and motorcars, seems praiseworthy, natural, logical. The American success story is "from log cabin to White House," but with no implication of monetary gain from such progress; the Haitian success story is rather "from penury to plutocracy."

It is not enough, however, to aim high in the material sphere. In proportion to their numbers the élite are extraordinarily ambitious for intellectual achievement. A distinction is sometimes made between the social élite and the intellectual élite, the former being decidedly more numerous.[1] Conversation in a Haitian drawing room is likely to be on about the same intellectual plane as in America except in specifically literary and artistic circles. Poetry, philosophy, literary trends, historical speculation are staples of discussion in more than a few homes. A recent president wrote many metaphysical poems. An American author, attending a social function consisting chiefly of secretaries of state, was amazed to find the group absorbed in a dispute about poetry.[2]

Aristocrats have always kept the lower orders at a distance socially. In Haiti this rule is observed with rigor. To suggest that a possible reason for such harshness of attitude and behavior toward servants and working people might be fear lest white visitors should class all persons of color together would be unkind, though not unsound. In general, there is a deep conviction that the masses are stupid. Although persons of culture exist who are generally solicitous for the betterment of their life, there is really no comparison which will make clear to the white reader the ordinary attitude of mind of

1. This distinction is clearly made in John Lieb, "Caste and Class in Haiti," *American Journal of Sociology*, XLVI, No. 1 (July, 1940), p. 30 ff.

2. W. B. Seabrook, *The Magic Island*, p. 161. "On my way home from the palace," concludes the author, "I reflected how queer it would seem for a group of cabinet ministers and Treasury officials at the White House to be earnestly discussing the poetry of an American anthology which included metaphysical love-lyrics by Calvin Coolidge."